

Arapahoe Avenue Underpass Project Community Feedback Summary 2016

April 4, 2016: Open House

A public open house was held in conjunction with the Civic Area Open House on April 4, 2016. An event notification postcard was mailed to more than 1,600 residents, property owners and community interested parties. Parks and Recreation and city communications staff also promoted the public house through social media, webpages, press releases and city newsletters. Over 200 people attended this meeting. Project graphics and comment form were posted to the project webpage following the meeting.

The majority of feedback received through the open house and project comment form was in support of Option 1 for its ability to meet the project goals in the most cost effective manner. At this time, no path connection or on-street crossing options had been developed.

April 8, 2016: YOAB

On April 8, 2016, project staff conducted a focus group with the Youth Opportunity Advisory Board (YOAB). YOAB is comprised of 16 Boulder Valley School District high school students who work to promote the youth voice in the community, provide opportunities for city youth and advise municipal government on youth-related policies and issues. The same project graphics and comment form provided at the Civic Area Open House were presented to YOAB. The youth's concerns for the project focused on lighting within and on the approaches to the underpass, and the need to incorporate art into the project to "make the underpass more welcoming." These elements were included within both project designs. Given that, the YOAB members supported Option 1 for its ability to meet the project goals in the most cost effective manner, similar to the feedback received through the open house. At this time, no path connection or on-street crossing options had been developed.

May 7 and June 11, 2016: Jane's Walk

On May 7, 2016 and June 11, 2016, project staff participated in two Walk2Connect Civic Area Jane's Walks. The Jane's Walks celebrate the life and work of urban innovator, Jane Jacobs. The walks took participants along the Boulder Creek and through the Arapahoe Underpass. Staff explained the project goals and project options and solicited feedback. Six people attended the May 7 walk and five people attended the June 11 walk. Participants at both events were in favor of Option 1 for its ability to meet the project goals in the most cost effective manner. At this time, no path connection or on-street crossing options had been developed.

May 11, 2016: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Open House

On May 11, 2016, project staff participated in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Open House, held in the Gallery at the Boulder Main Library. Approximately 100 people attended the event. The same project graphics and comment form provided at the Civic Area Open House were presented. The majority of feedback received was in favor of Option 1 for its ability to meet the project goals in the most cost effective manner, consistent with prior public input. At this time, no path connection or on-street crossing options had been developed.

June 9, 2016: Boulder Transportation Connections (BTC)

On June 9, 2016, project staff presented the two underpass options to the Boulder Transportation Connections board of directors. BTC is a membership organization of business, resident and city leaders partnering to enhance travel in and around Boulder. BTC expressed general support for the project but did not have a stated preference for either underpass option. At this time, no path connection or on-street crossing options had been developed.

June 6, 2016: Community Cycles Advocacy Committee

On June 6, 2016, staff presented the project options to 10 members of Community Cycles' Advocacy Committee, a non-profit organization of bicycling enthusiasts. The same project graphics provided at the open house, YOAB and the BVCP Open House were presented. At this time, no path connection or on-street crossing options had been developed. The Advocacy Committee did not support either preferred option because neither improved the north-south bicycle route from the Broadway multi-use path to 13th Street. The following feedback was provided to the project team by the Advocacy Committee via email in August: increase funding for the project; do not reconstruct the on-street crossing to include a z-crossing because it does not support the TMP goal for more residents to walk and bike; improve north-south connectivity for bicyclists; separate north-south and east-west traffic at the path intersections on the south side of the underpass; and please reconsider all concept options. The last request relates to the committee's suggestion of a south path connection option that included a bridge connection from the Broadway multi-use path on the south side of Boulder Creek to the on-street crossing at Arapahoe Avenue and 13th Street. A similar design was considered in the initial stages of the project but was removed due to the inability to complete the improvements within the project budget, for the lack of travel options it provides for those traveling north and east along the Broadway and Boulder Creek multi-use paths, and due to its potential to increase conflicts at the on-street crossing at Arapahoe Avenue and 13th Street by encouraging greater use by faster moving cyclists and skateboarders.

Following this request, and a similar request from the Transportation Advisory Board (below), the project team reconfigured the design options to differentiate north path, south path, on-street crossing and underpass options. South Path Connection Option 2 is the same design options proposed by the Advocacy Committee.

June 11, 2016: Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)

On June 11, 2016, staff presented a brief on the project process and discussion of the two underpass options to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). TAB requested the project team bring more design options to the public for north and south path connection options and on-street crossing options. TAB specifically requested the project team reconsider the south path connection option suggested by Community Cycles. Following this request, and a similar request from the Community Cycles Advocacy Committee (above), the project team reconfigured the design options to differentiate north path, south path, on-street crossing and underpass options. South Path Connection Option 2 is the same design options proposed by the Advocacy Committee.

Aug. 31, 2016: Second Public Open House

On Aug. 31, 2016, staff presented two north path connection, two south path connection, two underpass and four on-street crossing options to the public at an open house held on the south side of the underpass. The public were generally supportive of the project with most people not having a preference for either underpass option, but stated preferences for the most cost

effective option and no preference for either north path connection option. About 20 percent of attendees preferred south path connection 2 because it provided grade-separated path crossings (east-west boulder creek path and north-south path over the creek), with the remainder of attendees preferring south path connection 1 for its ability to meet the project goals at an estimated lower cost. The majority of attendees preferred on-street crossing 1 because of the simplicity of use it provided.

June 11, 2016: TAB

On June 11, 2016, the same display boards used at the second open house were used to present to three members of TAB. Option preferences for each of the path connections, on-street crossings and underpass options varied by board member. One member requested a site visit to better understand the options. Preferences of the remaining two were: one was supportive of underpass one because it provided a better user experience and didn't encourage faster speeds by creating a "straight shot," and one did not have a preference; one was supportive of south path connection 1 because it more equally benefits all users and introduces fewer users into the on-street crossing, and one did not have a preference; two did not have a preference for an on-street crossing option; and no preference for the north-path connection options was shared by the members present. Additionally, staff was asked to design simple and intuitive path convergences, regardless of option; to consult with Boulder County Farmers Market, and to provide an opportunity for a site visit to better understand the existing conditions and project design options.

Sept. 23, 2016: TAB

On Sept. 23, 2016, staff provided a site visit to TAB member, Dom Nozzi. Dom requested the site visit to better understand the various design options. After assessing the existing conditions and discussing the various path, on-street crossing and underpass options, Dom stated a preference for Underpass Option 1 for how it better meets the safety goals of the project by mitigating bicyclist speeds through design; for South Path Connection Option 1 because it better supported desire lines of all users within the project area; for On-Street Crossing 4 because it reduced the number of vehicle lanes on Arapahoe Avenue; and did not state a preference for either North Path Connection options.

Sept. 26, 2016: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)

On Sept. 26, 2016 staff presented a brief of the project to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB). PRAB members requested a site visit to better understand the existing conditions of the project area and the proposed design options.

Oct. 5, 2016: Boulder County Farmers Market

On Oct. 5, 2016, project staff provided a site visit with Brian Coppom, Executive Director of the Boulder County Farmers Markets. Brian expressed preference for On-Street Crossing 1 or On-Street Crossing 2 because they equally provided improvements to the southern end of 13th Street which could be beneficial to Farmers Market operations; for South Path Connection 1 because it would encourage a safer and more appropriate speed of entry into 13th Street and the Civic Area Central Park area; and did not state a preference for either underpass option or north path connection option.

Oct. 17, 2016: PRAB

On Oct. 17, 2016, staff provided a site visit to all members of the PRAB. PRAB appreciated the site visit and found it helpful to better understand the project design options. At this time, no preferences were offered by board members.

Oct. 24, 2016: PRAB

On Oct. 24, 2016, project staff presented a brief of the project to the PRAB. The PRAB was unanimous in its preference for Underpass Option 2 and North Path Connection Option 2 because they, collectively, provided more usable space within the Civic Area Central Park and provided more options for the East Book End planning process (scheduled to occur in 2016-2017); for South Path Connection 1 because it provided a safer approach to the park for pedestrians and bicyclists; and On-Street Crossing Option 2 because it could potentially slow speeds of bicyclists entering 13th Street and the Civic Area Central Park.

Oct. 28, 2016: CPWD

On Oct. 28, 2016, project staff held a site visit with David Robinson, Executive Director of the Center for People with Disabilities. David suggested path connections be streamlined for easier use and navigation by all users and suggested using colors for wayfinding to provide accessibility and mobility aids for all users. David stated that the Underpass Option 2 may provide less accessibility to users with mental and/or cognitive impairments because of its enclosed structure; that On-Street Crossing Option 2 would be more helpful for those with sight impairments; and stated a preference for South Path Connection 1 because South Path Connection 2 would feel less safe and could potentially create greater conflict between higher speed bicyclists and pedestrians.

Nov. 7, 2016: Community Cycles Advocacy Committee

On Nov. 7, project staff presented the same display boards used at the second open house to present to the Community Cycles Advocacy Committee. These boards showed the two north path connection, two south path connection, two underpass and four on-street crossing options. The committee did not state a preference for either Underpass or North Path Connection options. The committee did state a preference for South Path Connection Option 2 and On-Street Crossing Option 1 because they combined to improve north-south bicycling mobility and improved safety at the path intersection on the south side of the underpass through grade separation.